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U.S. Department of the Interior

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National Seashore

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Point Reyes National Seashore News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Point Reyes National Seashore Works to Save Endangered Species

This past week volunteers and park staff at Point Reyes National Seashore started planting approximately 600 endangered Sonoma Alopecurus (*Alopecurus aequalis* var. *sonomensis*) plants in isolated areas of the park. The locations were selected for their similarity to existing habitat of the Sonoma Alopecurus. The National Park Service hopes this project and other resource activities will protect this federally listed endangered plant. Resource specialists estimate only 5,000 individuals of this rare species may still exist in the world.

Approximately 1,200 plants were grown in collaboration with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area Native Plant Nursery program from locally collected seeds. The introduction is a restoration research project through UC Berkeley supported by the Seashore's Pacific Coast Learning Center.


Point Reyes National Seashore historically supported six occurrences of Sonoma Alopecurus. Ten additional occurrences have been documented in Sonoma County. Most of the Sonoma County occurrences are believed to be extirpated or are presently declining.

In summer 2000 and 2001, with the support of volunteers and the Point Reyes National Seashore Association, the six historic occurrences within the Seashore were revisited and a comprehensive survey of potential habitat was conducted. Presently, three of these six historic occurrences appear stable and three support no plants. Since 2000, two new small populations have been discovered within Point Reyes bringing the total number of occurrences to five.

In 2001, three of the historic Sonoma County occurrences of Sonoma Alopecurus were also visited. Only one of these three occurrences was found to support plants. A thorough survey of these Sonoma sites will be conducted this year. Additionally, in 2000 and 2001, seeds were collected and deposited for long-term banking at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden in Southern California.

The park is currently preparing monitoring and management plans for this species. An interested working group of grass and rare plant ecologists is being assembled and will convene this year to visit Alopecurus sites, discuss the species status, and recommend conservation strategies to be included in a future management plan.

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This project is part of the National Seashore's ongoing effort to ensure preservation of habitat and native species. The National Park Service has received natural resource preservation funding from Congress as part of the Natural Resource Challenge.

Please visit our expanded website at www.nps.gov/pore and visit the California Fedpage at fedpage.doi.nps for information on all Federal natural resource agencies in California.

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